

This final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), prepared by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), adopts the draft Silver Bow Generation Project EIS as the final EIS with modifications. The final EIS contains a summary of major conclusions and supporting information from the draft EIS including the agency's recommendation (Section 2.0), a list of all sources of written and oral comments received during the public comment period of the draft EIS (Section 3.0), the agency's responses to substantive comments which includes a summary of the comments received and disposition of the issues involved (Section 4.0), and a description of modifications and corrected errors to the Draft EIS (Section 5.0). Section 6.0 contains public comments and responses to the Continental Energy Services (CES) Montana Pollutant Elimination System (MPDES) permit.

### **Public Participation**

One of the prime objectives under MEPA is to involve the public through each step of the decision-making process. This is accomplished by (1) seeking preliminary comments on the purpose and need for the pending action and potential issues of concern, (2) requesting and evaluating public comments about the environmental review, and (3) informing the public of the final decision, and provide a justification for that decision in the form of a Record of Decision after review of the Final EIS.

The draft EIS was issued for public comment December 24, 2001. To seek comments from the public on the draft EIS, the DEQ conducted three public hearings:

Wednesday, January 16, 2002 in Choteau, Montana;  
Thursday, January 17, 2002 in Helena, Montana; and  
Saturday, January 19, 2002 in Butte, Montana.

Locations for the meetings were selected based on areas likely to experience the greatest impacts from the proposed project.

During the 30-day public comment period for the Draft EIS, comments were also submitted to the DEQ in writing. All substantive comments received during the public comment period have been reproduced with DEQ responses in Section 4.0 of this EIS. Sources of public comments are listed in Section 3.0 with associated comment identification numbers.

### **CES MPDES Permit**

The DEQ heard and collected written comments on CES MPDES permit during the same public comment period and hearings listed above. These comments and responses are included in Section 6.0.